

CHAPTER VIII

ROGER'S PERSONALITY: HIS

COURT :HISCHRONICLERS

THERE exists only one contemporary representation of Roger. On the wall of the Church of the Martorana in Palermo a mosaic shows the great King being crowned by the Saviour. Roger wears the dalmatic of the Legateship and the Byzantine imperial costume. Over his head is inscribed in Greek characters $\text{Po}^{\wedge}\text{pio?}$ $\text{PTQ}^{\wedge}$; cufic characters on an adjoining pillar complete the impression of the blending of civilisations. The King has a full black beard and moustache; perhaps the portrait is merely conventional, it is at all events the only reputed portrait of Roger II. * We learn more from a written description of a contemporary,³ who tells us that the King was

* The caricatures of the Borao MS. of Peter of Eboli represent Roger also as a black-bearded man. Bertaux (*op. cit.*, vol. i., p. 355) considers the enamelled plaque in St. Nicholas of Bari, which represents Roger, to be of late date, probably made at Limoges from a portrait sent from Apulia, the figure showing mistakes in costume which no Greek workman would have made. St. Nicholas claims, but without basis, that Roger was crowned there in 1130, instead of at Palermo, "Romuald, anno 053.